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BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES

Application Number: 10/076,362
Filing Date: February 14, 2002
Appellant(s): DRUYAN ET AL.

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GROUP 3600

Darcell Walker
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For Appellant

EXAMINER'S ANSWER

This is in response to the appeal brief filed August 10, 2007 appealing from the Office

action mailed October 27, 2006.

(1) Real Party in Interest

A statement identifying by name the real party in interest is contained in the brief.

(2) Related Appeals and Interferences

The examiner is not aware of any related appeals, interferences, or judicial proceedings which will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the pending appeal.

(3) Status of Claims

The statement of the status of claims contained in the brief is incorrect. A correct statement of the status of the claims is as follows:

This appeal involves claims 1-11, 13-23, and 25-28.

(4) Status of Amendments After Final

No amendment after final has been filed.

(5) Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

The summary of claimed subject matter contained in the brief is correct.

(6) Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

The appellant's statement of the grounds of rejection to be reviewed on appeal is correct.

(7) Claims Appendix

The copy of the appealed claims contained in the Appendix to the brief is correct.

(8) Evidence Relied Upon

2003/0126001   Northcutt et al.   12-2001

(9) Grounds of Rejection

The following ground(s) of rejection are applicable to the appealed claims:

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-11, 13-23, and 25-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Northcutt et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 20030126001).

As per claim 1, Northcutt et al. teach:

A method for displaying a list of service requests from multiple service request

systems on a single display comprising the steps of:

receiving a service inquiry at a service manager location (see ¶ 65; where a work

management person receives a service request.);

formulating and sending a service request status message to a plurality of

persons from the service manager (see ¶¶ 50-51, 54-56, 60-62, and 65-67; where a

status code is created or updated for a service request. The status of a service

request is sent to the appropriate persons.);

receiving and merging responses to the service request status message from

service ticketing systems into a single list of responses (see ¶ 72 and figure 17;

where a summary of all of the service requests analysis and status are received and

viewed.);

sorting the tickets in the response list by predetermined parameters and

generating a sorted ticket request list (see ¶ 59 and figures 23-24; where the tickets

are displayed in a list with several parameters presented. A user can sort the lists b

clicking on one of the field headers.); and

displaying the sorted ticket request list containing ticket request from multiple

ticket request systems (see ¶ 59 and figures 23-24; where the tickets are displayed

in a list with several parameters presented. A user can sort the lists b clicking on

one of the field headers.).

Northcutt et al. fail to explicitly teach sending service requests status to a plurality

of service ticketing systems. A plurality of service ticketing systems is defined as a

plurality of interfaces to retrieve ticket request information (see Specification pages 11-

12). Northcutt et al. teach a plurality of interfaces that can be used to retrieve, view,

modify or edit service requests (see ¶¶ 53-55 and 59-63; where a plurality of interfaces

available to users is described. Each interfaces enables different types of users to

access information in a format most appropriate for their role. Each interface receives

and displays information.). Furthermore, Northcutt et al. teach sending service requests

status (see ¶¶ 65-67; where upon submission of a service request, the service request

is sent to a service request manager via email. The IT person responsible can update

any of the submitted fields, including the service request status.). Thus, Northcutt et al.

disclose sending service requests status and a plurality of interfaces (i.e. a plurality of

service ticketing systems). The advantage of sending service requests status to a

plurality of service ticketing systems is that it enables users to view updated data and

changes made to data. It would have been obvious, at the time of the invention, to one

of ordinary skill in the art to incorporate the feature of sending service request status to

a plurality of service ticketing systems in order to enable users to view updated data and

changes made to service request data, which is a goal of Northcutt et al. (see ¶¶ 5-6).

As per claim 2, Northcutt et al. teach:

The method as described in claim 1 further comprising the step of converting the

service status request message to a format for each particular ticketing system (see

¶ 52; where service requests are placed into an XML or HTML format for each

interface used by the users.).

As per claim 3, Northcutt et al. teach:

The method as described in claim 1 further comprising the step of converting the

responses from the plurality of ticketing systems into a common format for receipt

and processing by the service manager (see ¶ 52; where service requests are

placed into an XML or HTML format for each interface used by the users, including

the service manager.).

As per claims 4, Northcutt et al. fail to teach the "sorted list is stored in cache

memory". It is old and well-known in the art to store temporary data in cache memory.

The advantage of storing sorted lists in cache memory is that it enables users to sort the

same data in multiple ways. It would have been obvious, at the time of the invention, to

one of ordinary skill in the art to store sorted lists in cache memory in order to allow

users to sort the same data in multiple ways, which is a goal of Northcutt et al. (see ¶ 6).

As per claim 5, Northcutt et al. teach:

The method as described in claim 1 wherein said sorting step further comprises

creating multiple sorted lists (see ¶ 6; where users can generate reports that sort

data in multiple ways.).

Claim 5 further recites limitations already addressed by the rejection of claim 4;

therefore the same rejection applies to this claim.

As per claim 6, Northcutt et al. fail to teach the steps of "creating an integer

array", "comparing tickets in a response list in a one-to-one format using pre-determined

parameters", "directing a next free pointer in the array to a next ticket in a response list

in an order as that results from the comparison", and "storing a sorted response list in

the cache memory". It is old and well-known in the art to create an integer array,

compare pre-determined parameters of input data, and sort the data based on the

comparison of pre-determined parameters. The advantage of completing these steps is

that it allows for the sorting of data based on any of the available pre-determined

parameters. It would have been obvious, at the time of the invention, to one of ordinary

skill in the art to incorporate the steps to create an integer array, compare pre-

determined parameters of input data, and sort the data based on the comparison to the

sorting feature of the Northcutt et al system in order to allow for the sorting of data

based on any of the available pre-determined parameters, which is a goal of Northcutt

et al. (see ¶ 6).

Claim 6 further recites the limitation of "storing this list in the cache memory"

which is addressed by the rejection of claim 4; therefore the same rejection applies to

this claim.

As per claim 7, Northcutt et al. teach:

The method as descried in claim 1 wherein said sorting step further comprises:

determining whether a sort map exist for a service ticket list (see ¶ 59 and figures

23-24; where pre-defined reports are available to users to display service request .

data. A report maps corresponding database fields to report fields when generating

a report. Therefore, a pre-defined report is the same as a sort map.); and

displaying sorted tickets based on a sort from a preexisting sort map (see ¶ 59

and figures 23-24; where pre-defined reports are displayed to the users.).

As per claim 8, Northcutt et al. teach:

The method as described in claim 1 wherein said sorting step further comprises:

determining whether a sort map exist for a service ticket list (see ¶ 59 and figures

23-24; where pre-defined reports are available to users to display service request

data. A report maps corresponding database fields to report fields when generating

a report. Therefore, a pre-defined report is the same as a sort map.); and

creating a sort map when there is a determination that no sort map exist (see ¶

59; where users can manipulate existing reports to create a desired report.

Manipulating an existing report is the same as creating a sort map.).

As per claim 9, Northcutt et al. teach:

The method as described in claim 1 further comprising the step of:

determining the elapsed time since the last inquiry by a particular service

technician (see ¶¶ 60-63; where a report can be generated based on the status of a

service ticket assigned to him.); and

resetting the ticket lists in the cache, if a predetermined time period has expired

(see ¶¶ 60-63; where a user can modify a displayed report or generate a new report.

The modification or generation of a new report re-queries the database for and pulls

new data in to the cache as described by the rejection of claim 4.).

As per claim 10, Northcutt et al. teach:

The method as described in claim 9 wherein said resetting step comprises

retrieving additional tickets for the ticketing systems (see ¶¶ 60-63; where a user can

modify a displayed report or generate a new report. The modification or generation

of a new report re-queries the database for and pulls new data in to the cache as

described by the rejection of claim 4.).

As per claim 11, Northcutt et al. teach:

A method for displaying a list of service requests from multiple service request

systems on a single display comprising the steps of:

determining whether a list of tickets currently exist for an inquiring service

technician (see ¶ 61; where a report can be generated based on the assigned IT

personnel.);

sorting the tickets in the response list by pre-determined parameters and

generating a sorted ticket request list (see ¶¶ 59-60; where users can sort based on

any of the pre-determined parameters.); and

displaying the sorted ticket request list containing ticket request from multiple

ticket request systems (see ¶¶ 59-61 and figures 23-24; where the sorted lists are

displayed.).

Claim 11 further recites limitations already addressed by the rejections of claim 1

and 6; therefore the same rejections apply to this claim.

Claim 13 recites limitations already addressed by the rejection of claim 8;

therefore the same rejections apply to this claim.

Claims 14-28 recite limitations already addressed by the rejections of claims 1-13

and further recite a computer program product and a system which are taught by

Northcutt et al. (see ¶¶ 51-53 and figure 2; where a system is taught. The system

further has a workflow management system which is a computer program product.);

therefore the same rejections of claims 1-13 apply to claims 14-28 as well.

(10) Response to Argument

In the Appeal Brief, Appellant argues the following:

Northcutt fails to teach "formulating and sending a service request status

message to a plurality of service ticketing systems from the service manager".

Appellants specifically argue the present invention is distinguished in that it uses a

plurality of service ticketing systems and the location to which the "service request

status message" is going to is different than Northcutt. Examiner does not find these

arguments persuasive because 1) Appellants are arguing limitations and features that

are not recited in the claims and 2) the argued claim limitation, construed under the

broadest reasonable interpretation, is obvious in light of Northcutt.

<u>1. Appellants arguments rely on features and limitations not recited in the claims.</u>

Examiner notes that although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993). Appellants argue several limitations and features not found in the claims. Specifically, Appellants arguments rely on a "gateway manager" / "gateway adapters" (see Appeal Brief page 6), "remote or distributed locations" (see Appeal Brief page 6), "backend-ticketing system...have various formats such as a single connections database or a Java database format" (see Appeal Brief page 6), and "service request information for each system is stored remotely in that system and then retrieved as requested by the gateway manager" (see Appeal Brief page 7). Appellants are arguing these features in order to draw the distinction that the architecture of the present invention is distinguished from Northcutt. However, Examiner maintains that these structures are not recited in the claims. Appellants broadly recite the functionality of the system without any limitations as to what structures are required to perform the functionality. Even if the claims were construed to include the non-recited features, the configuration of the present invention would still be obvious in light of Northcutt. With the structural limitations, Appellants would merely be arguing spreading the functionality Of Northcutt's server to several machines, which is within ordinary skill in the art. As such, Appellants arguments reciting limitations and features not found in the recited claims are irrelevant and not found persuasive.

2. The "formulating and sending a service request status message to a plurality of service ticketing systems from the service manager" limitation, construed under the broadest reasonable interpretation, are obvious in light of the teachings of Northcutt.

Under the simplest and broadest reasonable interpretation, a plurality of ticketing systems can be construed to mean a general method of viewing ticketing information incorporating different systems, where a system is merely any machine. Examiner submits that Examiner's interpretation that different users that are presented with distinguishing information constitute different systems. As such, Northcutt et al. teach a plurality of interfaces that can be used to retrieve, view, modify or edit service requests (see ¶¶ 53-55 and 59-63; where a plurality of interfaces available to users is described. Each interface enables different types of users to access information in a format most appropriate for their role. Each interface receives and displays information.). Appellants argue that a plurality of ticketing systems are independent ticketing systems such as Help Desk or CRM systems (see Appeal Brief page 6), however, no such requirement is found in the claims. Appellants define "a plurality of service ticketing systems" as a plurality of interfaces to retrieve ticket request information (see Specification pages 11-12). Thus, Examiner submits that Examiner's interpretation of the claim language is reasonable.

Northcutt further teaches sending service requests status (see ¶¶ 65-67; where upon submission of a service request, the service request is sent to a service request manager via email. The IT person responsible can update any of the submitted fields, including the service request status.). Appellants confusingly argue that the present

invention requires that this step "is making a request" whereas in Northcutt the request

"is a response to a previously received inquiry" (see Appeal Brief page 7). Examiner

maintains that this is the same thing. If a previously received inquiry exists, the inquiry

must have been made at some point. Appellants even further argue that the present

invention is distinguished based on this limitation because of the location of where the

status inquiry is going is different from Northcutt. However, in both inventions, the

status inquiry is sent to the ticketing systems and the response from the systems is

directed back to the manager drawing up the status reports (see ¶¶ 61, 65-67). Thus,

the functionality of a manager sending an inquiry to the system is in both invention, and

Northcutt goes one step further in rendering a report to the manager based on the

inquiry.

Thus, Appellants argument that Northcutt fails to teach "formulating and sending

a service request status message to a plurality of service ticketing systems from the

service manager" is not found persuasive.

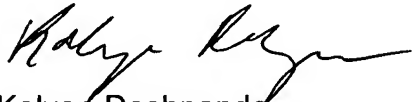**(11) Related Proceeding(s) Appendix**

No decision rendered by a court or the Board is identified by the examiner in the

Related Appeals and Interferences section of this examiner's answer.

For the above reasons, it is believed that the rejections should be sustained.

Respectfully submitted,

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